

REMARKS

Reconsideration of this application, in view of the following remarks and above amendments, is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-17 are currently pending in the present application. As indicated above, Claims 1, 5-7, 11-12, and 14-15 have been amended. It is gratefully acknowledged that the Examiner has allowed Claims 14-17, and has found allowable subject matter in Claims 5, 7, and 11-13.

In the Office Action, the Examiner has rejected Claims 1 and 6 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by *Thakker* (U.S. 6,487,602 B1), Claims 2, 4, 8, and 10 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Thakker* in view of *Fryer* (U.S. 6,233,428 B1), Claims 3 and 9 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Thakker* in view of *Lappenbusch et al.* (U.S. 5,982,298).

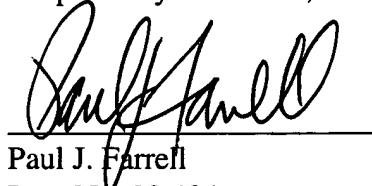
As indicated above, the Examiner has rejected independent Claims 1 and 6 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by *Thakker*. However, as indicated above, Claims 1 and 6 have been amended to include the allowable subject matter cited by the Examiner, i.e., the recitations of Claims 5 and 7, respectively. Claims 5 and 7 have been amended to depend consistently from amended Claims 1 and 6, respectively.

Additionally, Claims 11, 12, 14, and 15 have also been amended to correct minor informalities.

PATENT
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In view of the preceding amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that all pending claims, namely Claims 1-17 are in condition for allowance. Should the Examiner believe that a telephone conference or personal interview would facilitate resolution of any remaining matters, the Examiner may contact Applicants' attorney at the number given below.

Respectfully submitted,



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